

2-1 Favor Palestinian Nation; Many are Undecided

Americans by 2-1 say there should be an independent Palestinian nation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, though more than a third have no opinion on the subject.

In an ABC News poll completed Sunday, 45 percent said there should be such a state, 20 percent said there should not and a large 35 percent had no opinion.

Public opinion on the subject has been unsettled, with different questions eliciting a wide range of results - not surprising given the issue's distance and complexity. George W. Bush was expected to offer guidelines for a future Palestinian state in a speech today.

One poll last fall noted that George W. Bush favored creating a Palestinian state, and asked if people supported his position; 77 percent did. An ABC News poll in April asked if the United States should "recognize Palestine as an independent nation"; 68 percent said yes. At the other end of the spectrum, a recent news poll found an even division on "the establishment of a Palestinian homeland" - 34 percent said yes, 32 percent no.

This poll asked, "Do you think there should or should not be an independent Palestinian nation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip?" Those who said yes were asked if it should include East Jerusalem; about half had no opinion, with the rest dividing evenly.

Support for a Palestinian nation is highest in this poll among college graduates (57 percent) and young adults (53 percent of 18- to 34-year olds). It's lowest among rural and lower-income Americans.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News poll was conducted by telephone June 21-23, 2002, among a random national sample of 1,157 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Fieldwork by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at <http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>.

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Full results follow. * = less than 0.5 percent

1. Thinking about the Mideast, do you think there should or should not be an independent Palestinian nation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip?

| | Should | Should not | No opin. |
|---------|--------|------------|----------|
| 6/23/02 | 45 | 20 | 35 |

2. (IF YES, Q1) Do you think this nation should or should not include East Jerusalem, or don't you know enough about it to say?

| | Should | Should not | No opin. |
|---------|--------|------------|----------|
| 6/23/02 | 24 | 22 | 54 |

END